

A major preoccupation with contemporary South American novelists, as seen with Gabriel Marquez's "100 years of solitude" and Isabelle Allende's "The house of the spirits", is the traditional and long lasting conflict between the Liberals and the conservatives. Although a common preoccupation with Marquez, Allende, and various other Latin American novelists the manner in which this preoccupation is expressed varies considerably depending on the author. In "100 years of solitude", Marquez looks to satire in all its forms, to express this preoccupation. This is contrasted with Allende's "The House of the Spirits" in which she uses conflict in ideologies between generations as her method of exposition, as seen for instance in the conflict between Esteban Trueba (a true conservative) and his granddaughter Alba.

To see how Garcia and Allende treat political issues we must first examine why they chose to examine them. When Marquez wrote his first works Colombia suffered the second greatest American fratricidal war of the twentieth century, as a result of the assassination of the popular Liberal leader Jorge Eliecer Gaitan, in 1948. His novels examine in his words "...motives for that violence." The importance of politics in the Novel is reflected in the choice of title 100 years of solitude which correspond to the 100 years between the formation of Colombia, in 1830 to 1930 when Conservative homogeneity ended. Allende on the other hand was the niece of the first Socialist president in Chile who was killed following the Coup. The Oxford Dictionary defines satire as a piece "...in which prevalent follies or vices are assailed with ridicule or serious denunciation." This is exactly what Marquez has done. Hyperbole is well used in the novel in the form of 'Magical realism'. Marquez believed that 'Magical Realism' "...provides a magnifying glass so readers can understand reality better..." (as quoted in Playboy interview). We first see this used in the opening pages of the novel where Marquez describes the world as "...so recent that many things lacked names, and in order to indicate them it was necessary to point." This parallels the political naivety of the newly formed Colombian republic. Macondo is a garden of Eden "...so peaceful that none of us has died, even of a natural death." In this Garden Ursula Iguaran is the Eve and Jose Arcadio Buendia is Adam.

Macondo's innocence is ended with the arrival Don Apolinar Moscote, the first magistrate sent by the Government. He orders them "...to paint the front blue and not white as they had wanted." The absurdity of this demand demonstrates Marquez satirising the use of colours to represent political parties in Colombia and South America. In Colombia Blue represents the Conservatives and red the liberals. This idea is further satirised when Macondo is alternating politically between the 2 forces: "The houses painted blue, then painted red, had ended up with an indefinable colouration" This shows the meaninglessness of the colours and how in the conflict, the parties become indistinguishable in their barbarity. Meanwhile Jose Arcadio Buendia refuses to paint his house blue as he had wished it to be white a symbol of both purity and neutrality. This commences the never-ending cycle of violence typical of South America as Moscote returns within eighty days with a handful of soldiers. The violence is limited however due to the marriage of Aureliano Buendia to Moscote's daughter. The situation is rife with irony as while this marriage limits the amount of violence at that stage it creates far more at a later stage as this marriage serves to introduce Aureliano Buendia to politics as he receives "...some schematic lessons." in politics from his father in law. Despite Moscote painting the Liberals as "...bad people..." Aureliano comes away from the lesson sympathising "...with the Liberal attitude." Yet he still cannot "...understand how people arrived at the extreme of waging war over things that could not be touched with the hand." The irony of this statement is at the core of Marquez's satirical attack on political conflict that being the stupidity in fighting over an idea. The irony in the statement is that Aureliano eventually joins the fight on the side of the Liberals following the conservatives fixing the ballot boxes. While at first he thinks he fights for justice the fighting becomes so meaningless to him that he's "...fighting because of pride." And then when he

realises that the fighting is useless and that the Liberals rebels are now just "...fighting for is power." Ultimately Aureliano comes to realise the pointlessness of the fighting when he said "...we fought all those wars and all of it just so that we didn't have to paint our houses blue." It is here that Marquez uses Bathos to satirise the conflict when after 32 armed failed uprisings when Aureliano Buendia is finally on the verge of "...victory..." he negotiates a peace treaty and uses government forces to put down his own officers who rebel and "...called for victory...".

Arcadio Buendia is a character used to satirise the typical Latin American tyrant: "the cruelest ruler that Macondo had ever seen" . While he is a liberal by word, by action he displays all the characteristics of a conservative tyrant with his obsession with the symbols of power and his immature conviction that through official stationary and proclamations one can govern a society. This is paralleled with Aureliano who beomes what he is fighting. This is seen when Moncada says "...out of so much hatred for the military, out of fighting them so much and thinking about them so much, you've ended up as bad as they are." Marquez uses the execution of Arcadio to satirise the Colombian political hero, shouting: "Long live the Liberal party!" This is an authentic echo of Colombian political rhetoric this reflects the insignificance of the parties and the fact that he died for something that he did not even practise. This rhetoric is also seen with Gerineldo Marquez who, when asked what he is fighting for by Aureliano, replies: "For the great Liberal Party." Aureliano says that this is bad as he is fighting for "...something that doesn't have any meaning for anyone" This shows Marquez satirising the purposelessness of political conflict in Colombia.